THE Reconstructionist

Vol. IX. December 24, 1943 Kislev 27, 5704 No. 17

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REALITIES AND VALUES

CORRESPONDENCE

Dedicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of Israel's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

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NEWS OF RECONSTRUCTIONISM

LAUNCHING THE FELLOWSHIP

On January 9th, 1944, at the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, 15 West 86th Street, New York, a conference will be held for the purpose of launching the Fellowship of Jewish Reconstructionists. Rabbis and laymen have been invited to participate in this important meeting. As our readers may already know, the purpose of the Fellowship is to create small but compact Chapters of men and women, led by rabbis in various congregations —or by other leaders who may be qualified for the task—who will dedicate themselves to the study and advancement of the Reconstructionist philosophy and program.

The response to the call has already been very encouraging. Invitations to the Conference will be issued to rabbis and to a maximum of ten of their laity, upon request. Please contact the office of the Foundation (15 West 86th Street, New York) if you desire to be included among those invited.

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BASIC COURSE IN RECONSTRUCTIONISM

A ten unit syllabus has been prepared for use by Fellowship chapters, consisting of a basic course in Reconstructionism. Numerous requests have already been received for this study material. The syllabus consists of outlines, suggested readings, questions, subjects for discussion and suggested projects. In addition, a detailed outline is also available setting forth possible activities for individuals or groups interested in implementing Reconstructionism in their homes, synagogues or communities.

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RECONSTRUCTIONISM IN SPANISH

An interesting request has been received from Argentina, for permission to translate "Judaism As A Civilization" and other of Dr. Kaplan's writings into Spanish, for distribution in Latin America. When completed, this will be the third translation of this material, a Hebrew and a Yiddish version having already been made. (These latter two, incidentally, are available at the office of the Foundation.)

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RECONSTRUCTIONISM ON THE WEST COAST

Dr. Ira Eisenstein has just returned from a Reconstructionist tour of the west coast, having lectured in Los Angeles and Oakland, Calfiornia. The results of his visit are already in evidence: a Reconstructionist group has been organized in the Community Center of Los Angeles, under the direction of Mr. Jacob Alkow. Other groups are in the making. Many hundreds of pamphlets were distributed and large numbers of subscriptions were entered during and following Dr. Eisenstein's visit. In January Dr. Kaplan will lecture in these communities, and there is good reason to believe that the Reconstructionist movement will be off to an excellent start there.

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EDITORIALS

OUR MODERN HELLENISTS— A HISTORICAL ANALOGY

THE observance of Hanukkah assumes for us a deeper meaning than ever now that not only the Jewish people but all the democratic forces of the world are engaged in a struggle for survival and freedom. The historic similarity between the Maccabean war of liberation and the present conflict is deeper than would appear at first sight. The fundamental likeness of the two wars is that both are clashes not only between antagonistic political and military powers, but between antagonistic civilizations. Every war between conflicting civilizations of which one seeks domination and the other survival and freedom must be fought by the latter on two fronts, an external and an internal one. The foes against whom the Maccabees, for example, had to contend, were not merely the Greco-Syrian armies but the Jewish Hellenists. These were the men who, deeply impressed by the brilliance of Greek civilization and the success of its eastward march, felt that they were riding "the wave of the future" when they identified themselves with the cause of Hellenism. Some of them were undoubtedly venal scoundrels eager to curry favor with any who had favor to dispense. But others were probably sincerely convinced that Greek civilization was inherently superior and that it was sheer obstinacy and obstructionism for Jews to insist on loyalty to the Torah. They no doubt considered the Jews who persisted in their ancestral ways as narrow-minded, and regarded every protest of theirs against Hellenistic encroachment as intolerance.

In the contemprary struggle of democracy against nazism and fascism, the same two fronts are discernible. In virtually all of the United Nations, when the war began, there were elements that had ranged themselves on the side of fascism in one form or another. They had been impressed by its dynamism and efficiency and had been convinced that the "new order" at which it aimed would inevitably have to replace the democratic way of life. Among them, as among the Jewish Hellenists, were many depraved self-seekers; but others among them were probably honest advocates of the social order that seemed destined to be established. We cannot, for example, accuse all of those who took an important part in the councils of the America First Committee of reprehensible motives. But, in effect, it makes little difference whether the Quislings and Lavals who identify themselves with the civilization with which that of their own people is in conflict are sin-

cere or not. The activities of those who have fallen under the spell of fascism are a menace to the survival of our American way of life and must be combated as such. With our entry into the war, these activities were largely forced under ground, but we must keep an eternal vigilance against their resurgence in disguised form. Every attempt to deny to any individual or group of individuals the liberty to pursue activities in which they are interested and which do not interfere with the welfare of others must be recognized as a disguised fascism and fought as such. This is true whether the victims be Jews, Negroes, Americans of Japanese descent, or any other element of our population.

The stake of the Jewish people in the victory of the democracies needs no comment. The survival of Jewry and the Jewish way of life are again involved as in the Maccabean War. And yet, among our people too, we still have the modern equivalent of the Hellenists. We refer to those who demand of their fellow Jews the surrender of their right to be loyal to their Jewish ideals and the institutions which they deem indispensable to their fulfilment. A Jewish congregation in Houston, Texas, for example, excludes from its membership, and by implication from the fellowship of Israel, all who adhere to the rules of *kashrut* or espouse Zionism. What a vile insult to the martyrs who gave up their lives rather than eat forbidden food at the behest of the Syrian tyrant, and of the warriors who perished for the freedom of Judea from the Syrian yoke! If it is a principle with these Texas Jews that they must eat *trefot,* nobody will deny them the right to do so. But this does not give them the right to deny equality of status in Israel to those who see in *kashrut* an expression of Jewish loyalty.

And what justification have they for their sabotage of Zionist effort? The strangest thing about these modern Jewish Hellenists is their effrontery in waging their fight against the Zionist striving to insure the survival of Judaism and the Jewish people, in the name of Jewish religion. They identify Zionism with secularism, and secularism with irreligion. Why are they so furious against Zionism? The reason, but thinly concealed behind their absurd rationalizations, is that they are embarrassed by being identified with a people which the tremendous forces of tyranny and oppression would like to destroy or suppress. Like their prototypes in the days of the Maccabees, they have no faith in the value of Jewish life and would like to see Jews give up all those aspects of Judaism which seem to stand in the way of the social acceptance of Jews by non-Jews. We do not challenge their right to refrain from participating in the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine, if it means nothing to them, any more than we challenge their right to disregard *kashrut.* But we do deny their right to interfere with the effort to establish a Jewish Commonwealth on the part of other Jews who find its establishment necessary to their security or to their self-fulfilment as Jews.

How ironical it is that these Jewish Hellenists celebrate Hanukkah! They no doubt rationalize their doing so on the ground that Hanukkah stands for freedom of religion. That is something in which they think that they too believe. Are they not grateful that they can worship God in their temples without interference? But true freedom of religion means more than mere freedom of worship, just as religion means more than worship. A man's religion includes his sense of responsibility to God for the entire pattern of loyalties based on the social relations in which he is involved—his duties to his family, his kin, his neighbors, his community, to the ancestors who have bequeathed to him his cultural heritage, to

the descendents to whom he feels obliged to pass it on enhanced and enriched by his own experience. Religious freedom is denied whenever men are inhibited in the free expression of any of these loyalties. It follows that every historic group which does not seek to impose its way of life on others has a right to exist. And that means that it has a right to create the conditions which are necessary to its continued existence. Unless our assimilationists agree with the anti-Semites that the mere existence of the Jewish people is a menace to mankind, they have no right to interfere with the realization of the Zionist hope.

We Reconstructionists, because we have resented the effort of the American Council for Judaism and those Jews who support it to frustrate Zionism, have been charged with intolerance. Well, Zionism is part of our religion. If our combating efforts to interfere with our freedom of religion is intolerance, we admit the charge with pride. We do not think that the Maccabees were any more tolerant of the Jewish Hellenists in their day.

THE CONFERENCES AT CAIRO AND TEHERAN

HEARTS beat high among freedom-loving people all over the world when the news of the Cairo and Teheran conferences reached them. That news not only inspired confidence in the military victory of the United Nations but hope in the achievement of a just and enduring peace. The knowledge that the heads of the governments of Russia, Great Britain and the United States at Teheran and of China, Great Britain and the United States at Cairo had reached a definite determination to act in concert after the war, and not merely during its prosecution, had a heartening effect on all men of good will. Particularly encouraging was the decision of the Teheran conference to create an agency for international peace which all democratic nations of the world will have an opportunity to join. There is a world of promise in the opening words of the communique from the Teheran conference, "We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose"; also in the statement, "We recognize fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us *and all the nations* (italics ours) to make a peace which will command goodwill from the overwhelming masses of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge and terror of war for many generations."

The conferences seem to point to the speedy inauguration of the final steps to military victory and of the first steps to peace and reconstruction. We leave it to the experts to indicate what still needs to be done on the military front and the production front before the final victory is achieved, but we deem it timely to call attention to much that still needs to be done, if the noble purpose to effect "a peace which will command goodwill from the overwhelming masses of the peoples" is to be achieved.

What these masses want after the war is the abolition of imperialism, of the government of some peoples by others without their own consent and in the interest of the governing power and not of the governed. To state this objective is easier than to know what to do about it. There are peoples so inexperienced in the art of self-government that to entrust them with independence would merely mean to sell them into bondage to some local leader or group that would tyrannize over them and ignore their needs. Such peoples must be placed under the protection and tutelage of nations of greater political maturity and more scientific outlook on life. There are also small and hitherto sovereign nations, some of them standing in the very vanguard of civilization,

which are not powerful enough to make themselves secure against external aggression and need the protection and assistance of the Great Powers. But here lies the danger. These Powers must not be permitted, because of their greater responsibility to direct the affairs either of the smaller nations or of colonial regions against their interests, to exploit them economically, to impose their own cultures upon them or to frustrate their growth and development. That is why it is of the utmost importance that the small and weak nations and the colonial regions be given a share, at as early a date as possible, in the construction of the peace.

We do not agree with those too far-sighted idealists who expect a full settlement, while the war is going on or immediately thereafter, of all the complex problems that might conceivably contribute to the causation of future wars. We are, therefore, pleased with the progress so far made and registered in the reports of the conferences. But we should like to see as a next step, for which the progress achieved has paved the way, the participation of at least the other United Nations in preparation for the post-war world. Unless this step is taken soon, much of the good effected by the conferences is likely to be lost; for the small and weak nations, the respect for whose rights is the acid test of a genuine peace, are waiting impatiently to learn what they can expect at the hands of the Great Powers.

And certainly we Jews will await these future decisions with bated breath (but let us hope, not "with whispered humbleness"). We are not in a position to compel these Powers to respect our rights. All the more will their treatment of our needs register the moral worth, and hence the enduring quality, of the peace which they establish. A study of the history of international relations between the last World War and this reveals to what extent the treatment of the Jewish people serves as a barometer of international ethics. In the era of Wilsonian idealism, the nations sought to redress the age-old wrongs of our people by recognizing our historic claim to a national home in Palestine. They also sought to solve the vexatious problem of peoples politically too immature, or militarily too insecure, for full sovereignty by making them wards of the League of Nations through a system of mandates. And as long as the League of Nations was recognized and its authority respected, Jewish rights were also treated with respect. But the era of Wilsonian idealism was followed by an era of cynicism and selfish isolationism, the era in America of the "return to normalcy," of the Teapot Dome scandal, of racketeering and gangsterism in high places, of the Ku Klux Klan, followed by the inevitable "ragged individualism" of the depression period. America did not enter the League of Nations. France felt herself abandoned by her former allies and became divided between two camps, one seeking security in new alliances among the enemies of Germany, the other seeking a pro-German orientation. Great Britain embarked on the fatal policy of appeasing the strong by betraying the weak. The League of Nations was ignored by the Great Powers except when it suited their purpose to go through the form of consulting it. And the Jewish people was betrayed by the issuance of the White Paper and the failure of the Powers to implement the minority rights clauses of the Versailles Treaty.

That history must not repeat itself. The present comrades-in-arms must continue their unity after the war. Their partnership, however, must be designed not to dominate and exploit the weaker peoples of the earth, but to put the maximum of force behind the decisions of an all-inclusive world agency similar in purpose to the

League of Nations, but constructed on firmer lines. If the conferences at Cairo and at Teheran should prove to have been the first steps in the evolution of such an international order, future generations will accord unstinted glory to the personalities of the leaders who took part in them: Stalin, Chiang Kai Shek, Churchill and our own great President Roosevelt.

THE NATIONAL JEWISH WORKERS ALLIANCE

THE National Jewish Workers Alliance is celebrating its thirtieth anniversary, and we extend to its leaders and followers our heartfelt congratulations. The record of the Alliance is replete with creditable achievements. Those who are deeply concerned over the future of Jewish life may well study the purpose of the Alliance, and its spirit, in order better to know what kind of Jewish activity and ideals are likely to win the ardent support of the masses of Jews.

The National Jewish Workers Alliance identified itself with four causes: Palestine, social justice, fraternity and Jewish culture. By binding them together into an organic unity, it has generated an enthusiasm and a loyalty which are the envy of many another organization. In the first place, the Alliance has recognized the important role of Palestine in the revitalization of Jewish life, and the rebuilding of Jewish collective existence. Approaching the Jewish group as one essentially national in character, it logically stresses the restoration of Eretz Yisrael as one of the basic elements of its program.

But Zionism means more than just bringing Jews back to Palestine. For the Alliance, it represents an opportunity for the Jewish people to make its contribution to the realization of social justice. The Alliance represents the synthesis of nationalism and progressive social thought and action. Although the members of the Alliance are profoundly interested in the political and economic problems of the countries in which they live, they understand that as Jews they cannot hope, anywhere in the world except in Palestine, to be free to mould a civilization in the spirit of Jewish prophetic idealism. In the land of Israel, the social set-up will be what the Jews make it. Hence, their great loyalty to and support of the Histadrut in Palestine.

In addition to the idealism which focuses their attention upon the building of Zion, the members of the Alliance recognize the importance of maintaining some form of mutual cooperation among themselves. For this purpose, fraternalism is utilized to advantage. All forms of Jewish voluntary association require that the participants derive concrete benefits, in addition to those spiritual benefits which accrue from the sense of belonging to a worthy cause.

To maintain spiritual contact with the Jewish national home, to derive inspiration for noble forms of social living from the collective experiences of the Jewish people, and to foster the sense of kinship and likemindedness necessary to true fraternal relations, the Alliance has devoted itself to the promotion of Jewish culture. It conducts a whole net-work of schools and cultural institutions on an elementary, secondary and adult level. Their educational standards are high and they are maintained by personal sacrifices on the part of parents and teachers that are worthy of emulation by other elements in American Jewry. In its provision for mutual helpfulness and cooperation for common practical and spiritual ends, the Alliance possesses some of the virtues of a community.

Segments of the Jewish population of America, unreached by congregations and their affiliated organizations, as well

as by the Jewish defensive bodies, are penetrated by the Alliance. It has succeeded in reaching deep down into the very heart of the masses. In this respect, the Alliance has made a notable contribution. Too often, Jewish life has narrowed down to a middle class affair. Labor groups have been largely alienated from the institutions of Judaism, and the Alliance has helped to neutralize the evil effects of this tendency.

It is to be regretted that the Alliance is still largely identified in the minds of most Jews with the Yiddishist movement. There is nothing inherent in its approach to Jewish life which should prevent it from broadening out into the English speaking groups. Some progress has been made in that direction. Habonim, the youth movement, associated with the Alliance, represents the younger generation, who are almost entirely English-speaking; and the fervor of the young people testifies to the fact that Alliance ideals can be translated into American terms. Indeed, Habonim is one of the finest youth movements in the country today, and deserves larger membership.

In the years to come, another broad change ought to be introduced, in addition to the wider use of English in the movement, and that is the development of a more positive attitude toward religion. In the early days, Jews who found that they could no longer accept the traditional interpretation of Jewish religion rejected it altogether. Those were the days when religion was regarded as an opiate of the masses, the tool of reaction, etc., etc. Today there is no longer any need for such extremism. Various interpretations of religion today offer a rational theology and a humanistic program, thoroughly compatible with the social ideals of such movements as the Alliance, and in fact, capable of becoming powerful allies. The old feud between the Labor-Zionists and the religionists has lost its meaning. The future should bring a rapprochement, to the enrichment of both.

In the meantime, *mazel tov* to the National Jewish Workers Alliance, and success to them in their undertakings!

REALITIES AND VALUES

THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE of Palestine after the war is at last on the agenda of diplomatic action. That in itself is encouraging, although it does not necessarily mean that the action which will be taken will be to our satisfaction. It is a relief, at least, to know that something is happening; that Dr. Weizmann had had an interview with Churchill before the Prime Minister left for the Cairo conference; that further negotiations are in preparation; that a delegation of the Jewish Agency, consisting of Shertok, Schmorak and Rabbi Fishman will soon leave Palestine for London; that Dr. Israel Goldstein, President of the Z.O.A., and Dr. Nahum Goldmann, administrative secretary of the World Jewish Congress, have been invited by Dr. Weizmann to participate in the discussions. From all this it appears that, when the April 1st deadline for implementing the White Paper ban on Jewish immigration arrives, its provisions will not simply be permitted automatically to go into effect. The opposition to the White Paper is not being ignored. A recent article in the London *Times*, which usually speaks the opinion of the government, sounds the first note of irresolution with regard to the implementation of the White Paper. As quoted in a dispatch of the JTA, it states that the "White Paper implies Jewish-Arab cooperation to jointly govern the country, but so far there are few signs of such cooperation." It acknowledges that, if the attempt is made to stop Jewish immigration, the reactions throughout Jewry would be "immediate and strong." But it adds that failure to implement the White

Paper would have "important repercussions in the Arab countries." To all of which, *Davar* in Palestine replies very pointedly that the Jewish people cannot surrender its future "because Malcolm Macdonald dragged British diplomacy into a mess."

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OVER THE PROTEST OF MANY church organizations, UNRRA has refused to extend relief to the famine victims of India. The explanation given is the shortage of shipping on account of the war. We are, of course, in no position to know how much shipping space is required or how much is available, but we cannot escape the suspicion that, if it were Anglo-Saxons who were suffering from famine, the shipping would be discovered or created to meet the emergency. It is bad enough that the war-situation does not make it possible for us to feed the hungry masses in enemy occupied territory, but to deny food to a population of a region belonging to one of the United Nations and occupied only by presumably friendly troops should lie heavily on our conscience. If there is any justification for not granting India immediate independence, it is the doubt of the capacity of the population to set up a government capable of ministering to the needs of the people. But, in that event, the people of India are the wards of Great Britain, and what can we think of a guardian that permits his wards to starve? To the extent that the war complicates the situation, the relief of India ceases to be the exclusive responsibility of Great Britain but becomes ours as well. We hope that UNRRA will still find some way of feeding the hungering masses of India. Apart from the immediate good resulting from such an act, it would go a great way toward quenching smoldering fires of hate against the Western world which, if left unchecked, may seriously hamper the prosecution of the war and the establishment of the peace in Asia.

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IN THE HEARINGS ON THE Baldwin-Rogers Resolution calling for a special commission to aid in the rescue of Jews from Europe, Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long argued against the resolution. The ground of his opposition was that there was no need for such a commission since the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees was doing all that it was possible to do and that some 580,000 refugees had been brought to this country in the last ten years. But there is an old saying that one must ask the patient whether he is benefiting by a course of treatment, not the physician. We Jews certainly cannot feel that any material relief has been given. Congressman Celler exposed the disingenuousness of Assistant Secretary Long's argument. He called attention to the fact that the majority of the 580,000 persons whom Long cited were mainly quota immigrants and that few of them were Jews. He declared forthrightly that the State Department had "turned its back on the time-honored principle of granting haven to refugees."

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HERE ARE SOME INTERESTING figures on the growth of the study of Hebrew in thirteen high schools in the City of New York: The total number of students has dropped 9 percent; the study of Spanish has increased 1½ percent; the number of students taking French, German and Latin has dropped 8 percent; those taking Hebrew have increased 5½ percent. To be sure, an increase of one percent in those studying Hebrew does not represent an aggregate equal to one percent of those studying other languages; but it is encouraging to note that more and more of the young people are taking advantage of their democratic right to learn the language of their own tradition.

Undoubtedly, Palestine will play an important role in the post-war world, and alert youngsters who study Hebrew may even profit from their knowledge in a concrete way.

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THE PALESTINE ECONOMIC Corporation has issued its report for 1940-1942. According to Bernard Flexner, Chairman of the Board, "Palestine remains the world's outstanding, successful exemplar of modern colonization. It has a dynamic, developing community. It can maintain hundreds of thousands of additional immigrants." Coming from a man who heads an institution dedicated to the investment of private capital in Palestine, this statement is highly significant. It does not always follow that, if private capital is reluctant to come in, the investment is necessarily poor; but it certainly follows that, where private capital is eager, there is good reason to be optimistic about the possibilities. Especially interesting is the statement found in the report with reference to the White Paper: "The four years which have elapsed since it (the White Paper) was issued have not revealed its economic justification." If considerations of humanity do not move the authorities, perhaps they will be moved by the fact that the White Paper is poor business.

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THE RECENT THREE-FAITH Declaration on World Peace, issued over the signatures of Protestants, Catholics and Jews in the United States, has been welcomed by the British Council of Christians and Jews. The Council went on record expressing its appreciation "of the terms of the pronouncement which it recognizes as a notable step forward in the sphere of Jewish-Christian collaboration and as an important contribution to world peace." The Council is making a careful study of the pronouncement, and will forward the results of this study to America. Thus, religious leaders of two nations and three faiths are doing important collective thinking on a vital issue. That they are able to come to more than innocuous conclusions augurs well for the future.

The Mystery of the Lost Hatred

By JOSHUA LOTH LIEBMAN

AMONG the great problems which confront the world now and will confront it with greater insistence after this war are these two: how humanity can achieve good relations between majorities and minorities and how peoples who suffer greatly from injustice can conquer the natural tendency to hate the perpetrators of that injustice. If mankind is ever to attain the good society which is the dream of religion, then it must learn no longer to be deceived and deluded by the falsehoods of demagogues and it must also achieve the spiritual victory over hatred and the understandable desire for vengeance. The experience of the Jewish people throughout the ages and in our century can serve both as a source of warning and of hope to humanity in the achievement of these two indispensable goals: truth and love.

Othello As a Parable

A few weeks ago I witnessed the superb version of Shakespeare's "Othello," with the leading role played by that great Negro artist, Paul Robeson. The story of that drama is well known; it tells of the loyalty and fidelity of Desdemona,

Othello's wife, to her noble husband and how the jealous and vengeful Iago, on the basis of lies and illusions, persuaded Othello of the infidelity of his wife, bringing ruin to all of them. As I left the theatre, it occurred to me that the story of the Jewish people, the minority people in its relations to the rest of humanity, could really be visualized in terms of Shakespeare's parable. Israel has been like Desdemona, gladly giving its substance, its patriotic service, the contribution of its intellect upon the altar of love, in country after country and in age after age. Not that the Jewish people consists of saints. No doubt the Jewish people has shortcomings which are either common to human nature or the inevitable results of abnormal and warping conditions. Yet it is undeniably true that Israel has produced prophets and philosophers, scientists and reformers, who gave all of their talent without stint to the Othellos of humanity.

And what has happened? Comes an Iago waving the handkerchief—the false and lying handkerchief—and the love of Desdemona-Israel is forgotten. It has happened in Spain, in Portugal, in thirteenth-century England, sixteenth-century France, twentieth-century Germany. Iago comes with his skillful, cunning propaganda, his half-truths, his quarter-truths, the wisp of lace, the fabric of contradictory accusations: "The Jews are communists; the Jews are capitalists; the Jews are warmongers; the Jews are pacifists! The Jews! The Jews! The Jews! The Jews!" And the Othellos of the world are bewildered, maddened, led to destruction. Read or witness Shakespeare's creation of genius and you will learn that all that Desdemona says, all of her protests of fidelity, all her record of devotion, all of the cornucopia of service and sacrifice vanish.

"Othello" might very well be taken as a parable by the western world. It should be seen, both as a warning to the individual and society and as illumination of social truth. What happened to the Moor, Othello? He allowed himself to be persuaded by the lies of Iago. He did not ask or seek objective evidence or truth. He permitted himself to be swayed and poisoned by appearance, rather than by reality. That is what happened to Germany a decade ago and to democracy during this decade, until the modern Iago had almost brought humanity to the fate of "Othello"—murder and suicide. Let the people ponder the truth of this immortal parable, that when men or nations are deceived by the lying handkerchiefs of vengeful destroyers, then not only are the Desdemonas destroyed, but the Othellos become self-destroyed. They believed the falsehoods about Israel, and the Democracies opened the portals to their own death—the bombing of cities, and all of the poisoned cup of universal pain and tears.

This should be a warning to all peoples to look behind the surface motives of the "honest, so honest Iagos" and to see lurking there the coiled serpents of the diseased and hating mind, to become suspicious of appearance and to search for reality and to accept in gratitude the loyalty and love of all of the Desdemonas, all of the minority peoples and groups of the earth. This is no time for pessimism or despair. I think that it is possible for humanity to be educated by the Othello-like experiences of these years and to come to distrust the plots of the Iagos and to begin to evaluate the service of the Desdemonas of the world. We may be at one of the great awakening moments of human history and it is one of the supreme functions of Israel, which suffers so much, to be the patient teacher of truth, vanquishing illusion.

The Amazing Absence of Anti-Gentilism

Yet, in spite of all of the tragic experiences of the Jewish people throughout the ages, an amazing thing occurred in the inner attitude of Israel—an attitude which can bring much inspiration and hope to our hatred-torn world of today. Many sociologists and psychologists try to explain why the non-Jew has hated the Jew in history, but few indeed ever ask why it is that the Jew does not hate the non-Jew. After all there is a problem of anti-Semitism in the world, but not a problem of anti-Gentilism. This very fact is a mystery which, as we consider it, will produce some great spiritual lessons for our bewildered humanity.

It is not my purpose to claim any unusual saintliness for our people, but it will become clear on the evidence of Hebrew literature through the ages and the whole Jewish attitude toward life and humanity that something almost miraculous did happen. The Jews never became haters of the world in the way that the world sometimes has become the hater of the Jew. This is not to say that there have not been occasional statements of bitterness on the part of individual Jewish writers, nor do I seek to argue out of existence the reality of certain religious and social prejudices which at times reflected themselves in the form of intellectual and spiritual arrogance. One can occasionally discern in Hebrew writers a kind of disdain for the surrounding non-Jewish population, for its lack of intellectual attainments, its rather pagan moral practices, its frequent unconcern with chastity and holiness. The Jews have had their full share of the defects of pride and social disdain. This normal reaction-pattern on the part of a persecuted group, by which it compensates for the insecurities of its own status by magnifying its virtues and by looking down upon other social groups —this normal sociological response of Israel is not the point at issue. What is at issue is the strange lack of mass hatred in the heart of Israel throughout the ages.

For if some skillful psychiatrists and neurologists at the time that the Jewish people was exiled from its homeland had heard a seer saying: "I foresee that this people, Israel, will be condemned to a life of wandering, will be scattered all over the earth, will be exiled from country after country, will be the victim of expropriation, civil discrimination, religious prejudice, economic rightlessness; what do you, the psychiatrists, diagnose as the inevitable result of this kind of destiny?", the psychiatrists would have been quite justified in predicting that the destiny of Israel would be either collective insanity or collective savagery. Now, while the Jewish people as a result of its experiences may be more sensitive and tense, no fair-minded observer could assert that a people capable of producing scientists and artists, business men and farmers, poets and musicians, century after century, even unto our own time of Freud and Einstein, became sterilely insane. Nor, on the other hand, did the Jewish people, frustrated, forced to repress its normal aggressions and understandable hostilities, surrender to sadism. This is what might have been expected: that as a result of all of the perescutions and pogroms, the Jews should have gone mad or become brutal, determined to wreak vengeance upon an inhuman society. This never happened.

This is not said in any spirit of boastfulness nor with any attempt to list Jewish contributions to civilization. The fact that there have continued to be Jewish contributions to civilization is the mystery. One is surely justified in asking the question: "What happened to the lost hatred which Israel must have felt for an unjust world? Where did it go? Whither did it disappear?"

A Defiance of Psychological Laws

The fact that the Jewish group has not been eaten away by the acids of hatred is the miraculous defiance of the normal laws of psychology. For the science of psychology teaches us today that, if an individual is subjected to enough frustration or is the unceasing victim of outer hostility and hatred, there inevitably accumulates in the soul of that man the dynamite of primitive impulses and passions which will make him either destroy himself or attempt to destroy the world. Now the Jew did not destroy himself and certainly, in spite of all provocaton, did not attempt to destroy the world, even in thought.

What I mean will become clearer if we remember the German story. During these last years, many writers have maintained that Nazism is quite understandable as a reaction to the terrible frustrations of the German people after the last war; that we should not blame the Germans too much for succumbing to Hitler and his program of hate, since that hatred was engendered in the German spirit by the unfair treatment meted out to the vanquished Reich in the post-Versailles pèriod. If the fanatical hostility of contemporary Germany is regarded as a normal response to social frustration, then surely it should be easy for the world to see that Israel's response is supernormal. After all, the Jews, century after century, lived under conditions far worse than those imposed on Germany by the Versailles Treaty, were the victims of much greater injustices and for very much longer periods of time, and yet, they somehow never developed a program of vengeance and collective hatred.

Jewish Impotence No Explanation of Lack of Hatred

This startling fact about Jewish psychology is best proved by a study of Jewish literature. Initially, one might imagine that the Jews, denied the possibilities of aggressive and sadist action by their relative social helplessness, might have sublimated their anger and rechannelled it into the safer waters of literary expression. In other words, the non-Jew might wonder whether the Jews did not develop a hate-literature in order to give expression to the normal emotions of a frustrated group. It is here that we experience one of our greatest psychological surprises. The Jewish people that should have developed a fear and a hatred of the stranger and a corrosive suspicion about all fellow-men, continued throughout the ages to write poetry and philosophy and religious and ethical volumes, resonant with love, mercy, justice, brotherhood.

If it be argued that the reason that the Jewish people did not develop anti-Gentilism as a program of action is that, after all, Israel did not possess the physical power with which to wreak vengeance upon the outer world, two answers can be given: in the first place, physical powerlessness would not have been a deterrent to literary sadism and in the second place, even where the Jew has lived under conditions of power, he has not surrendered to a policy of vengeance and retribution. The best proof of this is to be found in modern Palestine where the strong, muscular, pioneering Jewish community, provoked almost beyond endurance by Arab riots, nevertheless refused to develop a philosophy of hate, and to utilize the weapons and the guns at its disposal save for self-defense. Modern Palestine is the test case indicating the reality of the Jewish ethical tradition and demonstrating that the Jewish people as a whole, notwithstanding a few individual extremists, has remained true to its moral principles in times of power as well as of impotence. Israel, in an age

surcharged with violence and hate, itself the most tragic victim of social aggression, nevertheless has not surrendered to mass hate.

Israel's Message to Our Age

The message of Israel to our modern world thus contains two truths. It admonishes, in the first place, that the Othellos of the earth, the ruling powers among the nations, should not again allow themselves to be deceived and ruined by the false propaganda of any Iago, but should come to value and to appreciate the contributions and loyalty of every Desdemona, every minority group. In the second place, Israel, which has suffered so much and yet has never grown mad with the thirst for vengeance, may be able to be an example to our century which eventually will have to subdue all of the hatreds that have been let loose by this war —if the earth is to become good again. Israel, long ago described by the prophet as the suffering servant of the Lord, can bring good news to our age. For the lack of mass hatred in the soul of Israel should be good news, should encourage humanity in the confidence that it is possible to educate the human heart and to discipline human emotions by high ideals. Just as the minority people, Israel, disciplined and educated itself, never to succumb to anti-humanity, so the majority peoples in the world can yet train themselves to forego the primitive delights of aggression and persecution symbolized in one form by the disease of anti-Semitism. The experience of the Jewish people can serve both as a warning to persecutors and as hope to humanity that men and nations, still young and cruel in their immaturity, may yet become mature enough to live together, free of hatred as the creative sons of the one God.

The Cry in Jerusalem

By CHARLES E. SHULMAN

A LONE figure stood before the massive stones of the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. It was in the year 1934 when Europe trembled before the might of Hitler. Even Palestine had not escaped the evil winds sown in Germany. Every boat that arrived in Haifa was filled with refugees seeking asylum from tyranny. The heavy set man before the Wailing Wall was oblivious to his surroundings. The old Jews who passed him by did not know that he was Chaim Nachman Bialik, poet laureate of the Jewish people. How should they know the heroes of their generation, these old and bent souls who stood as their fathers and grandfathers had stood before them, whose hearts awaited miracles and whose sighs exhausted themselves in lamentations over past glories?

Chaim Nachman Bialik did not look like a prophet. His face was clean-shaven. His clothing, a grey business suit, was of the pattern familiar on any street of an American or European city. His stature was not compelling. Only his very blue eyes gave evidence of his great soul. In them was mirrored the charging fury of an untrammeled, divine spirit and the tenderness and simplicity of a child. He was a strange being among the people who hovered near the Wailing Wall. They belonged only to the past and he belonged to both the past and the future.

Alone with his thoughts, he gazed at the wall of sorrows. He seemed lost between two worlds, the world of day and night, of life and death, of orient and occident, of good and evil. Soon he would be on his way to Europe—to Vienna to undergo an operation planned to restore his health. He was now sixty-one years old. But the years had brought no peace to his soul. When he was young, the drunken peasants of Russia had waged pogroms against his brethren of the house of Israel. And now that he was approaching old age, the German intellectuals and university students were waging pogroms against his people. The protesting stones of the wall stirred an answer in his heart. Why must the Jewish agony of Europe extend even to his quiet abode in Palestine? Why must it clutch at his throat when he lay in sleep and paralyze his hand when he would labor at his desk? Of what use was his poetry and his prose? Of what avail were his writings when they had brought his people no redemption from evil, no freedom from slavery?

The deep red rays of the sun fell upon the stones of the Wailing Wall and painted them the color of blood. Blood, he remembered, was the ancient symbol of Israel's atonement. But what had poor Israel done that now demanded the shedding of its innocent blood in Europe? The thought made him weary. His strength was wasted and his spirit was low. Even here in Palestine, he reflected bitterly, the task was not complete and prophecy was not in full flower. The Jews were weak and the world was sinful. Mankind was sick and he was sick. He would soon face a physical crisis in Vienna, and he knew not whether he would survive the operation or die. And the Jewish people—the pawns of history—they, too, would soon face a physical crisis under the Hitlerite persecutions, and they knew not whether they would survive the ordeal or die.

Thus mused Bialik at the Wailing Wall of Jerusalem. His mind was troubled and his heart pained as he sought answer from the ancient stones that had defied kings and civilizations. He had come to find rest for his restless soul. But the stones were silent.

Suddenly his meditation was interrupted by a voice raised in supplication and prayer. Its tone was soft and it sounded like the cry of a bird mourning the loss of its young. So must Rachel have wept for her children in Biblical days. So must the stricken mothers of Europe have called after their innocents slain without cause. Bialik could not withstand the appeal of that voice. It penetrated deep into his being and sounded the sacred chords that united him forever with his people and his God. Louder grew its tone and firmer its texture, until it was no longer the mournful call of the widow and the fatherless. It was the cry in Jerusalem echoing the long life of Israel down the aisles of the years. It was the voice of the Eternal in the city of the Eternal speaking to a prophet in Israel:

"Chaim Nachman Bialik," the voice said, "you are weary now and broken in spirit. And so always are prophets in Israel. That you know. Or can it be that you have forgotten? For forty years you have wandered in the wilderness of the modern world, seeking justice in the streets of injustice and truth in the cities of falsehood. You have come back to Jerusalem, the dwelling place of your fathers, to rest, but you have found no rest because of the evil that is abroad. You are sick and your people are sick because the world is filled with clouds of hatred. You have rebelled against your brothers and against your God and it has not availed you. Come, now, and turn back the pages of your life for a brief moment. See what you have wrought. See how your poetry breathes for the

whole house of Israel. For you were born to suffer and to prophesy, to chastise and to comfort, to wound and to bind up the wounds of your people. Listen and be reminded of things past. Behold. . . ."

The stones of the Wailing Wall began to move before him. He looked and saw himself in Russia. He was a little child sated with hardship and lacking bread. He was in the larger city of Zhitomir working at a trade he knew not and loved not. He was in Odessa seeking shelter. The lot of his people was bitter. They had no bread, no opportunity, no citizenship, no status, no dignity, no hope. Turn where they might, the road to tomorrow was closed. The Russian prime minister had spoken in the name of the Czar. There was only one way of solving the Jewish problem, he had said: "*Kill one-third of the Jews, convert one-third of the Jews and exile one-third of the Jews.*" But the children of Israel were not ready to surrender their ancient heritage. They recited the words of the Psalm: "I shall not die but live and declare the works of the Lord." But their life was miserable and their declaration of God's works was feeble.

"Son of man," the voice continued, "do you remember your childhood in Russia? Have you ever forgotten the grinding poverty of your mother and the sad, frustrated look of your father as he studied the Talmud amidst the reeking peasants who frequented your humble abode? Even as you approached your sixtieth birthday you could not forgive humanity and God for robbing you of a tranquil and loving childhood. You remember, do you not, your own words:

'. . . see my temples are gray, my forehead is lined and seamed.
Much was I shamed since my youth, much have I learned to forgive;
Yet the wretchedness of your poverty still scorches within my bones.
I cannot forgive it. Nor unto Thee, O God, shall I forgive it.
And its flames burst forth to Thee from all my songs and inwards.
What shall atone for a mother's affliction?
Can anything repay the glory of manhood defiled?'

"Consider again your youth in Zhitomir. They wanted you to become a timber merchant. But God had set his seal of prophecy on your heart. He had made you, like Jeremiah of old, a fortified city and an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole land. You saw the lot of your people and your heart was afflicted by their plight. You found no outlet in your people. And you spoke to them what you considered in your poem to be *The Last Word.* Do you remember the thunder of your tone in those days of your youth?

'I heard your life was dark and drear,
I thought you knew you were oppressed,
And that you wept a silent tear,
And cherished hope within your breast.
I thought I must no minute waste.
I come, I come to you in haste.
I, at your side, like you will bleed,
Bind up your wounds where there is need.
And where it drips upon the ground,
I shall lick the blood from off your wound.
I shall console you, comfort, pray,
And rouse you from despair, dismay,
I shall not let you perish, die,
I bring you hope and faith, I cry.'

"Will you ever forget the wrath and disgust that overwhelmed you at the time of the Kishineff pogroms? Do you remember what you saw when you came to that horrible city to investigate the outrages against your people? In far-off America, they held mass meetings and formed the American Jewish Committee. Why? Because forty-seven Jews had been killed. But you, Bialik, discovered that something greater than Jewish bodies had

been killed. Jewish pride lay in the dust; Jewish heroism had been slain. You could not rest until you had written the awful truth about the miserable cowardice of your own Jewish people in their hour of travail. They died like rats without lifting a hand to defend themselves against their oppressors. They watched like cowards while the drunken peasants violated their wives and daughters and slaughtered their babies. And you dedicated yourself to expiating their inward sins by a poem of shame and anger which you called the *City of Slaughter*. Do you remember your anguish of soul as you began your work?

'And the pain is exceeding great
And exceeding great is the shame
And which of the two is greater
Say thou, son of man!'

"Do you remember, Bialik, how you turned in fury against both Israel and the God of Israel as you wrote:

'And hear thou, son of man!
When next the reader cries upon the platform
"Arise, O God, avenge the slaughtered victims,
Avenge Thy holy ones, the pious greybeards,
The suckling children, God, the little children!"
And all the people cry with him together,
And when like Thee, the very pillars tremble,
I will be cruel to thee, very cruel,
For thou shalt have no single tear to shed.
And should a cry arise in thee, I'll choke it!
Between their teeth if need be, I'll choke it;
I will not have thee mourn as do the others.'

"You roused a weak and slumbering people to new dignity. You taught them by your poetry to throw off their cowardice and to learn to defend themselves against their enemies. Because of your words, thousands of young Jews began to dream of freer worlds. Because of you, they went to Palestine and began to build there a home for their better selves. You put into them a new heart and a new spirit. Do you remember how poverty-stricken were their souls, how wretched was their bearing when you sought to pull them from the mire into which they had been cast down by their enemies? Only the wrath of a poet could stir them. Only the godly anger penetrating to their very bones could rouse them. You knew your people. For thus had you described them:

'Verily the people is grass, it is dry as wood!
Verily the people is a corpse, heavy beyond belief!
For though the voice of God thunder on this side and on that,
Yet the people moves not nor stirs nor quivers nor rises lion-like.

'Verily the people is lost, contemptible, abject,
Its works have no foundation, its actions no measure.
Millenia of wandering, exile insufferable,
Have perverted the heart, have dulled the nation's wit.
Schooled to bear the rod and the whip, how can they feel the pain,
The shame of the soul that suffers apart from the scourging body?
No! It will not wake save the whip waken it!'

"You wrote better than you knew, Bialik. You described the soul of Israel with the keenness of the prophet. Half free and half slave, moving in changing worlds with the aching weight of the great revelations of its illustrious sons, the people Israel hovered between yesterday and tomorrow. The World War broke in

all of its violence in 1914 and you were in Russia witnessing the degradation of man. You took pity on humanity as you took pity on God when you wrote your lines of poetry in those fateful years. You saw blood flow from the wounds of Christianity. But you saw even more blood flow from the wounds of Israel. Your people were the first to suffer, the last to be redeemed from suffering. Their lot was like your childhood.. Do you recall how you described them in the midst of their afflictions?

'My father—bitter exile, my mother—want.
'Tis not my staff or the shameful crib I dread.
More cruel than these, more bitter sevenfold
Is life without hope or brightness for the eyes.'

"It was an age of doubt and bewilderment, Bialik. And that you knew full well as you wrote of it. It is the same age that hovers over us today while the youth of Germany, perverted by an Austrian adventurer, prepares to make war upon the whole world. It was an age of grief and despair, Bialik. And this age casts its weight upon our souls as thousands of innocent lives never pass from the bud to the flower. It was an age of longing and quest, Bialik. And the age remains with us, while your people eagerly seek an outlet for their choked spirit and prepare to move to any country in the world where they may live out their years in praise of their Creator. Do you remember how you described the age, how you wrote in torment of spirit?

'The time is one of chaos and void, when the boundaries grow confused
Between the beginnings and ends, between annihilation and creation, between age and youth,
And we the children of the dusk, aware or blind,
Bow down in homage before rival gods.'

"You finally left the scene of your early labors and sorrows. you put behind you the European continent where art and science, music and literature must, it seems, forever endure at the mercy of the tyrant and the brigand, where democracy is sown in the earth at such bitter cost and is extinguished before it has seen the light of day. You followed the Jewish pioneers of Germany and Russia and Poland and Rumania to Palestine and settled in their midst. You saw pale college students fresh from European universities seize the plow and make fertile the soil of their fathers that had lain barren for centuries. You saw little children playing in the sunshine without fear of violence from brutalized Europeans. You saw cities spring up where there had been emptiness and void. You saw, atop the hills of Zion, the Hebrew University from whose buildings blessings would flow for the peoples of the Near East and the word of God from Jerusalem. Yet you did not rejoice. You remained silent. Your people showered you with honors, but you did not bask in the warmth of their praises. They called you their poet laureate, their greatest singer in a thousand years, their noblest prophetic voice since Isaiah. But your restless soul was unsatisfied. Unlike other flesh and blood, you considered yourself a failure when your fellow men considered you a success. Do you recall what you did in your modest home in Tel Aviv during those years? You abandoned your labors as a poet and became a teacher, a book publisher. You printed children's stories, so that the little ones of Israel might grow up in purity and with God's language on their lips. You looked at the sweating young toilers in the wheat fields of Palestine, and you wrote for them a new song,

a new psalm of labor. They still recite it as they struggle. Do you remember?

'Let my portion be with you, meek of the earth, dumb of soul!
Weavers of life in seclusion, humble in thought and deed,
Secret dreamers, who lessen words and increase glory,
Nobles who know not your caste, Lords of the spirit unknowing.
Masters of the art of fair silence, priests of divine stillness . . .
You who pass by, sowing about yourselves, without effort and intent,
The faith and purity that emanates from your very being,
As emanate the blue from the skies and the shadow from the green woods. . . .
You have no place in the ranks of seers, nor a claim in houses of art . . .
But the beauty of your life pours forth in the world even like a sealed fountain,
Unto the heart of a river, to quicken it, without its knowing.
By the living God, not a quiver of your eyelids shall be in vain,
Not the least tremor of your soul shall fall to earth.'

"You have castigated your brothers in Israel, Bialik. You have reproved them with godly intent and power. But the prophet in you has also uplifted them and shown them vistas of a greater world that is to be. You have shamed them for their littleness, but you have not abandoned them in their discouragement. And now I speak to you in your own words:

'Rise, brother, pray, for there is room for prayer.
And a place for hope—come, hope!
Live, stint no toil, take heart. . . .'"

And having spoken, the voice lost its power. It was no longer the cry in Jerusalem. It was again the low voice of mourning at the Wailing Wall. The flames of the sun receded and the massive stones of the wall turned purple and blue in the twilight. The prophet of wrath had heard and was no longer weary. He had seen and was no longer downhearted. A people who could bear reproof would live. Upon his visions and dreams would be built the foundations of their renewed life and labor.

Discussion in Theology

THE BASIS OF MODERN MAN'S BELIEF IN GOD

By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

JEWISH tradition contains accounts of visions in which men are said to have actually beheld God. The Torah records that what the Israelites saw and heard at Sinai was a direct self-manifestation of God. Even though they saw no form, they heard "a voice of words." Those words are said to have been uttered by no one but God. That same God had appeared to Moses in a burning bush, and many centuries later spoke to Elijah in a thin small voice. These theophanies are assumed to have been direct self-manifestations of God.

According to that same tradition, God revealed himself also indirectly. The miraculous events which took place for Israel's sake were regarded as proof of God's power. The prophets who felt impelled, often against their own will, to

deliver oracles to the people, were certain that God had put those oracles into their mouths. Thus empirical evidence of a sensate character is assumed in traditional religion to be the main source of men's knowledge of God's existence. Only few remote references to reason or reflection as the source of that knowledge are found in the Bible. We may therefore say that, according to traditional Judaism, the main source of man's awareness of God is some supernatural datum, in the form of sensate experience of God's actual reality, or in the form of some unmistakable sensate evidence of His power.

In Judaism, Philo may be said to have been the first to recognize an additional source of men's awareness of God. That traditional source is reasoned reflection, as developed by thinkers like Plato and Aristotle. These thinkers, in the course of their effort to comprehend all of reality under a single concept that would give it unity and meaning, were led to assume the existence of God. In this they differed from other Greek thinkers who regarded reality as inherently blind and meaningless mechanism or inexorable fate. According to Plato, only the assumption of the idea of the Good as the highest world principle, and according to Aristotle, only the assumption of some eternal, immovable and wholly independent first mover, can render reality intelligible. God was thus to them the principle of intelligibility. They did not infer his existence from sense data, but from the compelling demand of reason.

During the Middle Ages, the three historical religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, struggled to achieve a synthesis of what came to be regarded as the two main sources of man's awareness of God: empirical evidence and reasoned reflection. That synthesis assumed the historicity of the supernatural phenomena which pointed to the existence of God as a sense datum of supernatural character. At the same time it tried to reckon with the demand of reason. In compliance with that demand the medieval theologians formulated three types of rational proof for the existence of God: the cosmological, the teleological and the ontological.

The cosmological proof derived from the principle that every effect must have a cause; from that it follows that the universe as a whole must have a first cause. The teleological proof is based on the many evidences of adaptation of means to ends. Such adaptation implies purpose, and purpose implies one who purposes. The ontological proof starts with the assumption that the very idea of God implies perfection. What would so impair this perfection as non-existence? Hence God necessarily exists.

Most people, who come under the influence of modern thought, question the historicity of the theophanies and the miracles on which traditional religion bases its belief in God. They also know too much about the fallacies which modern philosophy has pointed out in each of the three so-called rational proofs for the existence of God to be wholly convinced. Nevertheless, they somehow manage to retain their belief in God. Were anyone to suggest to them that they do so because of their upbringing or force of habit, they would be the first to spurn such an explanation. Of course, that would not prove anything, since we are not, as a rule, qualified to account for our own beliefs and actions. Nevertheless, they owe it to themselves to justify their beliefs on grounds that would clear them of the suspicion of acting irrationally. It is therefore important for any modern person who feels strongly the need for believing in God to produce the credentials which validate that belief. It is the

purpose of the following argument to indicate the nature of such credentials.

II

The fact is that neither traditional religion nor pre-modern philosophy itself was really aware of how man came to believe in God. The study of the various religions of mankind points to an altogether different source of that awareness from the ones which they assume. The source of man's belief in God happens to be the same as that which yields the belief in the existence of human selfhood or personality.

We ordinarily maintain that we are sure of the existence of the self because we experience it. But how do we experience it? The self is the object neither of empirical evidence nor of rational inference. It is neither tangible nor visible. What we speak of as "I" is not something which any of the evident manifestations of our bodies by themselves could prove to be real. Cleverly constructed automata might be made to behave in a manner similar to human bodies, yet we would not ascribe personality to them. Least of all do we depend on philosophical or metaphyical arguments to verify the existence of selfhood. Yet there is nothing of which we can be as certain as of the reality of the self.

It is interesting to note that the very existence of the self, or human personality, has of late been seriously questioned, not of course to the same extent, but virtually for the same reasons that people have come to question the belief in God. The type of psychology known as "behaviorist" assumes that the belief in the existence of the self derives either from a mistaken interpretation of the phenomena of the body or from philosophical inference which is based on false reasoning. Behaviorists have accordingly come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as a self. They claim that the self is no more than the sensation of a catch in the throat. They maintain that there is no need whatever, when dealing scientifically with the human being, to reckon with the element of consciousness. Hence the saying that "psychology first lost its soul, then its mind, and finally its consciousness." If man were merely a complex system of conditioned reflexes as the behaviorists claim, he would think as accurately as a counting machine figures. The truth is that the very act of denying the self proves its existence. One is reminded of the fable of the water and the jug. Said the water to the jug, "You don't exist, because you're not like me." To which the jug replied, "If I didn't hold you, you wouldn't have the strength or the courage to utter a singe word." By now, behaviorism has turned out to be so bankrupt that few psychologists are willing to act as its receivers. This should be a lesson for those who want to divest human life as a whole of the belief in God.

If we want to know whence men derive their belief either in the self or in God, we must look to a source hitherto neglected. That source is the will-to-live, which the human being possesses in common with other living beings. In one extremely important respect, however, man's will-to-live differs from the will-to-live of the sub-human creature. Thanks to his extraordinary mental powers, man has been able to transform his will-to-live into the will-to-maximum-life or the will to make the optimum use of life. Man can remember past situations, imagine possible future situations, draw inferences and form judgments. Next to carrying on these mental processes in his own mind, he can communicate their products to his fellows through the medium of sym-

bols, and transmit them as social heritage from generation to generation. The very experience of living so sharpens man's will-to-maximum-life that it gives rise to a number of beliefs concerning realities which are invisible. Among the most important of these realities are the self and God. Without the belief in those realities, man would not be able to act humanly or sanely. In order, therefore, to comprehend what is meant by believing in God, we shall have to examine (in the subsequent issues) how man's will to maximum life, or his relentless urge to make the optimum use of life, actually functions.

Book Notes

"CHALLENGE TO FREEDOM," by Henry M. Wriston. Harper and Brothers: 1943. 240 pages.

IN the midst of the greatest collectivist trend in American history, there is a marked resurgence of articulate voices in defense of individualism. Some of these voices are the spurious voices of special pleaders who, under the cloak of individualism, want the larger profits and expanded areas of exploitation that accrue to private enterprise when it is freed from governmental controls. This book is not one of them.

Henry M. Wriston, president of Brown University, pleads for individualism as a way of life. For him it is the core of American idealism. Deposited in the individual, he believes, are all those virtues that make for the good life—will, imagination, courage, initiative, energy and skill. The exercise of these free-born endowments must not be bound or restricted by governmental agencies and bureaucratic controls. Wriston defines the duty of democratic government as the maintenance and expansion of freedom for the exercise of these free-born talents.

The concept of full production and full employment as the consequence and creation of governmental action is false to American tradition, he says, and endangers the survival of democracy. "No great civilization," he adds, "ever did or ever can make full employment its predominant objective." To make it such an objective is to deliver man into the bondage of the state. For the state to attain full employment it must operate a completely state-managed economy. A state-managed economy means aping the totalitarian practices of Hitler and Mussolini. It means the creation of an army of bureaucrats who will regulate and regiment the total life of the American people. For the individual to transfer his personal wealth-producing capacities to the state is a "retreat from reason."

The eighteenth century witnessed the flowering of a bureaucratic state in the person of Louis XIV. The bureaucrats of Louis's reign, says Wriston, regulated "how many fish could be brought to the market by stipulating the length of a fishing boat." They stipulated "how wool should be mixed, the size of a loaf of bread and its price." "How modern it sounds!" he exclaims. The end of the eighteenth century saw a complete reversal of this trend. Both the revolution in France and the revolution in America he views as a reassertion of individualism and a revival of faith in reason. Wriston equates power

with statism and reason with individualism. The New Deal and its managed economy of subsidies, social securities and work projects measure up for Wriston into some sort of political parenthood which has destroyed the "moral fibre" and weakened the free will of its citizen children.

The New Deal comes in for an honest measure of criticism when Wriston views its operation in the light of constitutional principles. Our founding fathers, he points out, feared the state of centralized and concentrated power. They split governmental power into the three-fold character of executive, legislative and judicial branches. Today, in government by administrative agencies, we have united this three-fold power in a single body. A single agency, and frequently a politically appointed agency, has the power to administer, legislate and adjudge. As further evidence of malpractice in government, Wriston cites the instance of government corporations which spend billions of dollars annually and are relieved, by the absence of legislative compulsion, from rendering an adequate accounting of their financial operations and practices. And through the purse strings of the Comptroller General, Wriston points out, federal power has been enhanced to undue proportions. The balance which formerly existed between the powers of federal, state and municipal government has been destroyed. Both the state and municipality are dependent upon the beneficence of Washington for adequate funds to execute to the full their local and state functions.

Wriston views the domestic scene as a war between the individual and the state. He sees a danger signal—a challenge to freedom—in the apotheosis of the state and its control by administrative officers. He sees moral defeatism in a political principle which places increasing emphasis on the demands of society and less and less on the individual. The results of "planning," "social engineering," and "the social service state" have not lead us into the path of sound economy, he points out.

They have lead us into the path of subsidies for restricted production and of protective tariffs and political isolationism to protect restricted home industries. Instead of expanding our economy governmental centralization has accelarated the tendency towards concentration and monopoly in our business life. "Social planning" and "government by experts" have failed to achieve the ends of a developing economy which they projected as their goal. These goals, says Wriston, in conclusion, are only possible through the individual efforts of self-discipline and personal initiative.

It does not seem to me that the condemnatory examples of bureaucracy in action, cited in this book, are at all conclusive, that modern America must revert to the ways of pure individualism if freedom is to survive. And yet this book is significant. But for quite another reason. This book is an eloquent reflection of a basic trait in American character. Americans cherish the joys of individual adventure and personal daring and they want the pecuniary rewards that result from them. They want unlimited opportunity to exercise individual initiative and personal imagination. They will resent any economy that removes individual opportunity and individual reward from the area of American life. And it is well for those of us who have pictured future America in the blueprints of our economic planners to pause for a moment and take full measure of a trait which is current and dominant in the character of our people.

The fallacy of Wriston's thesis is that it posits the choice for Americans as an "either or" decision. "Take individualism or collectivism," he indicates. But the ever-present existence of this choice is in no

sense assured. And when it occurs it is tempered by the realities of the industrial cycle. Of course Americans will choose the joy of adventure in perference to the shelter of unemployment insurance. But government controls, and agencies to administer them, came into being because this choice was denied them, and they desperately needed the protective aid which *only government* could provide and only *after* individualistic private enterprise had failed to provide it.

Democracy and freedom were in greater danger in the depression days of 1933 than they are under the bureaucratic regime of 1943. The excesses of administrative power can be curbed and the boundaries of administrative action can be limited by legislative controls in much the same way that legislative powers initiated these agencies.

Freedom is neither endangered nor challenged by the protective measures of the "collectivist" New Deal. Today's challenge is to Americans to embark on the adventurous path of creating in our country a new type of economy. This economy must maintain, and expand, the provisions for minimum standards of health, education and employment opportunity. This economy must vest ownership or control of basic resources in the state. This economy can provide for variants of cooperative management or ownership and this economy must provide wide latitude for individual talent, personal initiative and private profit. It is a challenge to free men to build a mixed economy that shall rise above the evils of both collectivism and individualism as men have seen them in our time.

LEOPOLD J. SNEIDER

CORRESPONDENCE

On the Palestine Government's Reconstruction Plan

Sirs:

I have always appreciated the constructive and understanding attitude *The Reconstructionist* has taken with regard to Jewish affairs and the relationship between Judaism and Zionism on the one hand and the outer world and Jewish people on the other hand.

Now, in one of the last issues of *The Reconstructionist* which reached me, namely that of the 25th June last, I found an article on post-war reconstruction in Palestine which, it appears to me, is not wholly consonant with the general attitude taken by *The Reconstructionist.*

I wish to state at the outset that I am opposed to the official Zionist attitude vis-a-vis the program of post-war reconstruction as announced by the High Commissioner and Sir Douglas Harris. That does not imply that I approve of the program as it stands. But I definitely and decidedly object to the non-cooperation policy which has been adopted by the Executive and the Actions Committee.

I am afraid that the article in question is based on incomplete and possibly one-sided information. Obviously it is based on Ben-Gurion's statement which is a very skilful and powerful analysis of the scheme. The question only is whether this analysis is correct. While it is only a truism to say that the policy of the Palestine Governnmet—and in consequence also the policy of reconstruction—are based on the White Paper as long as it stands, it is, in my opinion, not true or at least not proved that the reconstruction scheme as enunciated by the Government was devised *in order* to carry out with some peculiar purpose and interest the White Paper policy.

Of course, I do not blame the writer of this editorial, because it has been written on the basis of information and facts supplied to you. Moreover, I would like you to appreciate that I—like any other Jew—am uncompromisingly opposed to the White Paper and am very much upset by some—and possibly many—acts of the British Government in Palestine. But we should not close our eyes upon the fact that so far it was the British Government which had shown the greatest understanding for our suffering and that the U.S.A. too—as many indications show—will support our cause only if we can come to satisfactory arrangements both with the British and the Arabs. And it is because that article in *The Reconstructionist* unfortunately tends to obscure this sessential issue that I regret its appearance, at least in this form, and I would urgentlv suggest that *The Reconstructionist* should remain in touch with a variety of groups in Palestine in order to be able to judge the situation and form an objective opinion which should not be based only upon—maybe necessarily—one-sided information.

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